**Minutes: Bluemont Civic Association, Executive Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, July 27, 2022, 7 PM

St Ann’s Church Rectory Conference Room, and Virtual via Zoom

1. The President established that a **quorum** was present.

2. Members **approved the minutes** of the June 2022 Executive Board meeting by unanimous consent.

3. **Reports from Officers, Civic Federation Delegates, Committee Chairs:**

The President reported that in preparation for County Board consideration of the request by **SER restaurant to build permanent outdoor seating,** he had given the County planner a copy of the letter sent by the Bluemont Civic Association (BCA) in 2021 conveying the position taken by BCA members supporting this request.

The president and the Board discussed the **County’s new County’s Site Plan review process** that relies more on on-line surveys, and creates challenges for civic associations. The president noted that the latest Site Plan review committee meeting for the Ballston’s Macy’s project was planned for June or July, but has not yet been announced.

**Missing Middle Housing,** the President reported that presidents of 15 civic associations had met with County Board members Matt de Ferranti and Libby Garvey. The County’s current proposal would allow up to eight units to be built by-right on single family home lots. Ms. Garvey and Mr. De Ferranti said the County Board had designated them to meet with the civic associations, and that other Board members would be involved later on. Executive board members and the president discussed the problem with the other three County Board members’ not meeting with the civic association presidents, given that all five members will vote on the Missing Middle Study recommendations. Ms. Garvey and Mr. De Ferranti said the County was also looking to change zoning for single family homes, and these changes would apply to Missing Middle Housing. They did not indicate what changes were being considered.

Board members discussed some other civic associations having done surveys of members or residents on missing middle housing. At the June 2022 General Membership meeting, BCA members had voted to advertise a position for a vote by members at the September 28 General Membership meeting. That will lead to an additional Bluemont community discussion of missing middle study recommendations, where members can consider each other’s views and vote on the draft resolution, or any other actions or positions to be taken by the civic association. The President and Secretary will review the zoom chat of the June 2022 General Membership meeting to ensure the draft resolution text accurately reflects the discussion before we send it to BCA members.

The Second Vice President reported on the **800 N. Glebe Loading Dock July 7 annual community meeting:** No residents or representatives of homeowners’ associations attended the meeting. Since the community meeting last July, there have been no reported incidents of trucks violating the agreement that the building manager (developer JBG) made with the County and the community regarding loading dock and street-loading and unloading procedures. There was a productive discussion of the mitigation measures used by the building manager and loading dock management company to prevent problems. The loading dock manager has been in place for over a year and is following the agreed plan for delivery trucks. The developer and loading dock management company plan to continue Q&A sessions with homeowners, if they wish. At last year’s meeting, it was noted that the number of deliveries was down to 35 a week due to the pandemic. By July 7, 2022, it was up to 60 deliveries a week, compared to 70 a week pre-COVID, with no reported problems. This absence of reported problems provides confidence that the mitigation measures are working. The BCA Second Vice President had thanked the building manager and the loading dock management company for their work to make these mitigation measures successful, and their continued engagement with the community to prevent problems.

The **Treasurer reported** that the current balance in the BCA account is $2113.15. He had paid $14 to the Secretary as approved by the Board at its May 2022 meeting for her to obtain a second mail key to the BCA PO Box for the BCA President.

The Treasurer reported on his continuing efforts to find a way for BCA to accept **electronic payments for the annual dues of $15 per household**, and said he will continue these efforts.

He has reached out to civic association presidents about how they do electronic payments. Board members reviewed previous BCA discussions of whether incorporating would help BCA receive electronic payments for annual dues, the challenges and expenses of incorporating, and that it even after incorporating the Arlington County Civic Federation was still trying to get PayPal. The Secretary noted that the Board had agreed that for people unable to write checks, the Board agreed that the President could meet a member to receive a cash payment and provide a receipt. The President said he would ask the County’s Director of Public Engagement Jerusalem Solomon has asked to meet with him, and he would ask her about civic associations incorporating. He asked members to send him other questions he should ask Ms. Solomon. He noted that the date had not yet been set and said other Board members would be welcome to join the meeting.

The Treasurer, who founded the **Lubber Run Watershed group** with other civic associations and the Civic Federation reported that the County’s draft 10-year Capital Improvement Plan included $331 million for storm water, and that BCA’s resolutions had some influence in getting this level of funding.

The Treasurer discussed the County’s consideration of a **stormwater utility fee**. Under the proposal, some property owners would pay more based on the amount of stormwater flow caused by the development of their properties, property owners would get credit if they reduced stormwater flow from their properties, and/or took other measures. It was not yet clear how impermeable surfaces would be defined.

**BCA Civic Federation delegates** reported that the Arlington County Civic Federation (ACCF) is delaying its resolution on reforming Arlington County’s system of government in order to get more feedback, and have ACCF committees further consider the resolution and provide feedback.

4. **4600 N. Fairfax (Holiday Inn site) Site Plan Review:**

**Treasurer** David Smith has volunteered to represent the civic association at Site Plan review meetings for the 4600 N. Fairfax project (the Holiday Inn site). So far, only one Site Plan Review Committee meeting has been announced (September 19). There may be a second Site Plan Review Committee.

David Smith discussed the stormwater challenges posed by the 4600 N. Fairfax development**,** which abuts infrastructure carrying Lubber Run underground. He discussed the importance of raising such issues during the Site Plan review, as discussed at previous BCA General Membership meetings. The original Site Plan had allowed construction in the Resource Protection area of Lubber Run, but given concerns of BCA members about storm water and BCA positions taken on stormwater and the threat of flooding from Lubber Run in Bluemont, he will encourage the new development to do more to control stormwater.

Board members discussed how residents of N. Woodrow and N. Wakefield will be affected by the Site Plan proposal to use those streets for vehicle travel to and from the site to the new building with 477 apartments and the second new building with 29 townhomes. The Site Plan proposes connecting N. Wakefield and N. Woodrow streets, and a new road from Fairfax Drive through the site to connect with North Wakefield Street to the south. Secretary Laura Kirkconnell made a motion that the Board approve a flier she could distribute to residences nearest to the site along N. Wakefield, N. Woodrow and N. Abingdon Streets in order to encourage them to engage in the Site Plan review process. The motion was seconded by Civic Federation Delegate David Hughes and approved unanimously by the Board.

**Membership:** The Board discussed ways to increase membership, such as:

-- setting up a table at a farmer’s market. Second Vice President Matt Harrison will look into the process for doing that.

-- refreshing the website to make it easier to use on mobile devices

-- push notifications, e.g. of upcoming meetings

-- publicizing meeting topics more widely

-- using the County’s recent directory of contacts for multi-family housing to share information about meetings and other civic association activities

-- Posting physical notices of meeting topics, distributing fliers.

-- hosting a neighborhood event such as on Neighborhood Day or National Night Out

-- electronic payment of dues

-- Doing a brochure about what the civic association does

-- promoting Bluemont businesses on the BCA website

-- Advertising in the BCA newsletter or a flier. (Members noted that this could conflict with the need to keep the printed version of the newsletter short due to cost concerns.)

The President asked anyone willing to Chair the Membership Committee to please contact him.

**Meeting dates:**

Members agreed on the president’s **proposed schedule of meetings:**

September 28, 2022

October 26, 2022

November 16, 2022 (Thanksgiving is the 24th)

December 14, 2022

January 25, 2023

February 22, 2023

March 22, 2023

April 26, 2023

May 24, 2023

June 14, 2023 (if we want the school, otherwise, we could go to June 28.)

**Possible meeting speakers and subjects:** Board members noted the importance of the following issues, and discussed possible speakers:

-- The Missing Middle Housing Study, which will remain a top issue

-- Increasing BCA Membership

-- Stormwater

-- Tree Canopy

-- The increase in population in Bluemont and Ballston, given the level of emergency services infrastructure.

-- The Police community engagement team, noting community interest in crime trends such as thefts of catalytic converters. The Board noted the utility of sharing police department notices with members and via social media.

-- Northern Virginia Parks authority about plans to expand the W&OD path

-- League of Women Voters about the 2022 elections

-- Plans to Renovate Upper Bluemont Park, including installation of new tennis courts

-- The proposed Stormwater utility fee

Board members also discussed the importance of working with neighborhood civic associations on common issues, possibilities include a Wilson Blvd group of civic associations, or a Lubber Run group of civic associations. Board members noted that neighboring the planned expansion of the W&OD trail could bring civic associations together.

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm